

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 02381 291158Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 CPR-01 INR-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5395
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CONFIDENTIAL GEORGETOWN 2381

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, GY
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER FORBES BURNHAM'S REQUEST FOR AN APPOINTMENT
WITH PRESIDENT CARTER

REF: GEORGETOWN 2342

1. FOREIGN MINISTER FREDRICK WILLS TOOK THE OCCASION OF
MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON SEPT. 28 TO PRESS FOR FAVORABLE
CONSIDERATION OF PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S REQUEST FOR AN
APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER DURING EITHER OF THE TIME
PERIODS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED (PRIOR TO OCT. 25 OR AFTER
OCT. 30).

2. WILLS STATED THAT BURNHAM WAS BEING PRESSED BY THE
SOVIETS TO SET DATE IN RESPONSE TO THEIR OUTSTANDING
INVITATION THAT HE VISIT MOSCOW. BURNHAM, HOWEVER, IS
DELAYING HIS RESPONSE TO THE SOVIETS AGAINST THE HOPE THAT
PRESIDENT CARTER MAY BE ABLE TO SEE HIM. (IN RAISING
SOVIET INVITATION THERE WAS NO IMPLICATION ON WILLS'
PART OF USING IT AS "LEVERAGE." RATHER HE SEEMED
ALMOST PATHETICALLY EAGER THAT THE USG GIVE BURNHAM AND
THE GOG CREDIBLE GROUNDS FOR CONTINUING TO DEFER ON THE
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SOVIET REQUEST.)

3. WILLS REITERATED BURNHAM'S ACUTE DISAPPOINTMENT AT
NOT BEING ABLE TO VISIT WASHINGTON FOR THE PANAMA CANAL
SIGNING CEREMONY. PRESSURES AT HOME, NOTABLY THE
CRITICAL SUGAR STRIKE ENGINEERED BY OPPOSITION LEADER
CHEDDI JAGAN HAD PREVENTED HIS ATTENDANCE AND REQUIRED

HIM TO SEND INSTEAD HIS MOST TRUSTED CONFIDANTE IN THE GOVERNMENT PTOLEMY REID, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER.

4. COMMENT: BURHAM SEEMS CAUGHT IN A BIND ONLY PARTICALLY OF HIS OWN DEVISING. HE WOULD LIKE TO PAY A VISIT TO THE U.S. AT THIS TIME FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, BUT FEELS IT WOULD REPRESENT AN UNACCEPTABLE LOSS OF FACE IF HE WERE UNABLE TO MEET AT LEAST BRIEFLY WITH PRESIDENT CARTER DURING ITS COURSE. CERTAINLY OUR BEST INTERESTS WOULD BE SERVED IF SUCH A MEETING COULD BE ARRANGED. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT CRITICAL IN TERMS OF THE RELATIONSHIP, THE VISIT HAS GREAT POLITICAL AND SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE. IT WOULD DEFINITELY DRAW A LINE ACROSS THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE PAST IN US-GOG RELATIONS AND SIGNAL CLEARLY TO RADICALS HERE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE US. CONCURRENTLY, IT WOULD SERVE AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE GUYANESE WHO HAVE BEEN WORKING TO IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP.

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Message Attributes

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